

congratulate her on many years of hard work for the city of Sparks and her recent election to the Nevada State Senate.

As a graduate of the University of Nevada at Reno, UNR, Councilwoman Ratti is an exemplary role model who is truly devoted to the citizens of Sparks and Nevada. Before she was elected to the Sparks City Council, Councilwoman Ratti founded and served as president of Strategic Management Services, a consultant firm providing nonprofit and government services. Additionally, Councilwoman Ratti worked as an influential leader for young women as a Girl Scouts of the USA nonprofit manager and former executive.

Since her first term as councilwoman in 2008, she remained committed to helping the Sparks community by serving as a strong advocate for initiatives that helped meet the needs of the city's most vulnerable. Specifically, as chair of the city's redevelopment agency, Councilwoman Ratti focused on improving infrastructure and development in areas around Victorian Square, as well as refining recreational facilities. She also served on the Washoe County District Board of Health, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Capital Funding Protection Committee and Oversight Committee for School Facilities, and the Sparks Legislative Team.

Councilwoman Ratti's impact on local businesses and her relentless advocacy for improving the Sparks community should serve as an example to all. Her steadfast support for the children of Sparks, as well as her entire constituency, will be remembered and missed. Councilwoman Ratti's leadership and achieved success throughout northern Nevada proves her dedication to community service, and she should be proud of her accomplishments throughout her tenure as a Sparks city councilwoman. I am grateful for her commitment to Sparks and to the great State of Nevada.

Today I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Councilwoman Ratti on his retirement, and I offer my deepest appreciation for all that she has done for Sparks and Nevada. I offer my best wishes for many fulfilling years to come.●

#### TRIBUTE TO RON SCHMITT

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Councilman Ron Schmitt, of Sparks, on his retirement. After serving as a member of the Sparks City Council for 15 years, Councilman Schmitt retired on November 14, 2016. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate him on his retirement after many years of hard work and dedication to the city of Sparks.

Councilman Schmitt is an outstanding example of someone who is devoted to improving their community. Upon moving to the Silver State and living in the Sparks area for more than

two decades, Northern Nevada has greatly benefitted from Councilman Schmitt's leadership in and out of public office. Before taking on the role as city councilman in 2001, Councilman Schmitt served on the Washoe County Human Services Consortium Advisory Board as member and chair, the Sparks Planning Commission, and the Sparks Citizens Advisory Committee. Mr. Schmitt was also a member of the National League of Cities and Municipalities and once served on its board of directors.

Since his first term as city councilman, he consistently remained committed to the people of Sparks and has been a strong advocate for initiatives that meet the needs of families. Additionally, while in office, Councilman Schmitt managed RPS Consultant Enterprise, as principal, served as president of the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities, NLCM, and was selected as the "Public Official of the Year" by the NLCM in 2005. He also dedicated much of his time to the Regional Transportation Commission Paratransit Advisory Committee and the crisis call center.

Councilman Schmitt's participation in local business and community programs led him to be a tremendous leader within local government. His unwavering support and focus to ensuring the needs of his constituency were met will be truly missed. Councilman Schmitt remains a prominent leader and will continue to advocate on behalf of the Sparks community. He exemplifies the highest standards of community service and should be proud of his long and meaningful career. I am grateful for his loyalty and commitment to Sparks and to the great State of Nevada.

Today I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Councilman Schmitt on his retirement, and I offer my deepest appreciation for all that he has done for Sparks and Nevada. I offer my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JANET SNYDER

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Janet Snyder for tirelessly supporting Nevada's veterans and military families, particularly military spouses and widows. Mrs. Snyder is dedicated to giving back to the brave men and women who defend our freedom and has contributed greatly to the Las Vegas military community and to the greater good of the Silver State.

Mrs. Snyder understands the many sacrifices military families make on a daily basis. As an army wife, mother of three, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of five, she stands as a shining example of someone who has devoted her life to the betterment of others, selflessly serving to advocate for the interests of our Nation's heroes and their families each day. Her dedication reminds us all of the importance of thanking the men and women serving this great Nation, as well as their families, for their countless sacrifices.

Since the passing of her husband of 52 years, Mrs. Snyder has provided unwavering support and care for military widows as president of several military wives clubs and support groups. In fact, Mrs. Snyder was recently installed as president of the National Society of Military Widows in October of 2016. The Silver State is grateful and honored to have a Nevadan leading this critical organization. Additionally, Mrs. Snyder is the secretary and acting treasurer of the Society of Military Widows of Southern Nevada Chapter 34 and was also the founding president from 2012 to 2015. Mrs. Snyder is also an active member of multiple religious groups. She was editor of the Military Jewish Chapel Newsletter and directed and participated in many projects with local religious leaders from Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish communities.

Mrs. Snyder is also known for her outstanding advocacy for military widows by fighting against unfair benefit adjustments that negatively impact families of deceased veterans. Specifically, she has played a pivotal role in fighting for legislation, S. 979, to reverse the offset of the Survivor Benefit Plan, SBP, and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, DIC, programs so that spouses of late military retirees fairly receive their deserved benefits without any deductions. As a cosponsor of this bill in the Senate and as a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I truly admire Mrs. Snyder's commitment to these families and believe she is an extraordinary role model to all Nevadans.

Mrs. Snyder's hard work has not gone unnoticed. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mrs. Snyder for her noble contributions to the Las Vegas military community. Her service to Nevada places her among the most remarkable men and women of the State, and acknowledgement of her dedication is well deserved.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing Mrs. Snyder and her work with veterans and their families. Her efforts are both honorable and necessary. I wish her the best of luck in all of her future endeavors.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DR. MATTI VAZEEN

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. Matti Vazeen, an incredible ophthalmologist, for the unwavering care and support he provides to all of his patients in northern Nevada. Dr. Vazeen stands as a true example of someone who has spent many years dedicated to the Silver State.

Before settling in Nevada, Dr. Vazeen studied at Northwestern University and completed his residency from Louisiana State University in New Orleans. He established himself in Northern Nevada in 1999 and has worked in the Carson Valley area ever since. Dr. Vazeen is a well-known, prominent eye physician who specializes in serving seniors. Many of Dr. Vazeen's patients rely on his expertise and appreciate his